

DISPUTE RESOLUTION OFFICER ROLE

Role Summary

The Dispute Resolution Officer role consists of three grades (16, 17, and 18). Incumbents are responsible for resolving customer disputes through mediation and adjudication after all other internal means have been exhausted. Responsibilities are to ensure consistency in the dispute resolution process. This involves researching pertinent law related to disputes, drafting written hearing decisions, and mediating settlement agreements. Primary contacts are with the director, division administrators, bureau chiefs, regional managers, area managers, unit managers, taxpayers' attorneys and representatives, accounting and legal staff, tax advisors, other department staff, and internal/external customers.

Working Conditions

Mental stress is encountered as a result of critical deadlines, managing a heavy workload, the technical nature of the work, and the significance of decisions made. Work hours routinely exceed 40 hours per week. Situations are often tense and strained. Parties and witnesses are often hostile and antagonistic towards each other. Liquor protest and violation hearings can be particularly volatile. The Dispute Resolution Officer must maintain control over such discordant, precarious, and unpredictable proceedings.

Education and Experience

- Grade 16: competencies and degrees of proficiency are typically acquired through a combination of education and experience equivalent to graduation from a college or university with course work emphasis in taxation, accounting, business administration, economics, or law and five years of experience involving administrative adjudication, auditing, tax research, tax or liquor license appeals, customer disputes (including mediation and settlement efforts), including two years of experience in the preparation of decisions addressing sensitive and controversial subject matter for final approval. Other combinations of education and experience will be evaluated on an individual basis.
- Grade 17: competencies and degrees of proficiency are typically acquired through a combination of education and experience equivalent to graduation from a college or university with course work emphasis in taxation, accounting, business administration, economics, or law and five years of professional experience involving administrative adjudication, auditing, tax research, tax or liquor license appeals, customer disputes (including mediation and settlement efforts), including experience in the preparation of decisions addressing sensitive and controversial subject matter for final approval. Other combinations of education and experience will be evaluated on an individual basis.
- Grade 18: competencies and degrees of proficiency are typically acquired through a combination of education and experience equivalent to graduation from a college or university with course work emphasis in taxation, accounting, business administration, economics, or law and six years of professional experience involving administrative adjudication, auditing, tax research, tax or liquor license appeals, customer disputes (including mediation and settlement efforts), including experience in the preparation of decisions addressing sensitive and controversial subject matter for final approval; and one year of supervisory experience. Other combinations of education and experience will be evaluated on an individual basis.

Department Core Competencies

In addition to the role specific competencies, there are four, department core competencies that all employees are expected to successfully achieve. These are:

- *Interpersonal Skills:* Builds constructive and effective relationships with internal and external customers and is committed to meeting customer needs in a timely and accurate manner. Listens actively and attentively and demonstrates an appreciation of other perspectives. Builds the appropriate rapport required to do business. Openly demonstrates an understanding of and respect for the value of co-workers' contributions to the department mission.
- *Decision-Making and Accountability:* Considers the department's vision, mission, and values in making decisions and taking actions. Identifies and considers possible alternatives before making decisions. Bases decisions on achieving desired outcomes pursuant to the departmental business plan or management direction. Uses a combination of analysis, experience, and sound judgment that results in fairness and consistency, while being accountable for actions. When serious ethical issues are at stake, takes all necessary actions.
- *Commitment to Continuous Improvement:* Ability and willingness to continually seek greater efficiency in agency programs, is results driven, and meets changing requirements in work or direction. Adapts to changing conditions and work responsibilities. Accepts constructive criticism and suggestions and uses them to improve performance.
- *Personal and Work Ethics:* Creates own measures of excellence, and practices what he/she promotes. Sets goals that provide challenges and measures goal attainment regularly. Displays a contagious optimism about the work to be done. Goes beyond traditional ways to address issues despite obstacles or resistance. Is able to generate ideas, fresh perspectives, and original approaches and engages in open-minded thinking. Employs strategies to promote ideas and proposals to increase probability of acceptance. Mentors others to improve the performance necessary to achieve success. Reflects a belief that the results achieved are a direct result of his/her personal decisions and actions.

Grade Levels

Each grade level lists the essential duties that describe work performed 50 percent or more of the time (predominant work). Established work plans identify day-to-day tasks.

Grade 16

Predominant/Essential Duties

- Accountable for case management functions.
- Identify those cases that are amenable to mediation or settlement and works with parties to facilitate an agreement as opposed to adjudication requiring a decision.
- Responsible for maintaining confidential, sensitive information and evidence in contested cases.
- Assist with analyzing testimony and evidence in drafting decisions.
- Prepare decisions addressing sensitive and controversial subject matter for final approval.
- Set and preside over pre-hearing conferences to review and rule on discovery.
- Research pertinent law related to disputes.

Grade 17

Predominant/Essential Duties

- Responsible for scheduling and conducting all department and taxpayer-related disputes and liquor licensing adjudication.
- Draft hearing decisions and mediation settlement agreements that are clear, precise, logically organized, and legally defensible.
- Manage ad-hoc team activities and performance.
- Act as hearings examiner and/or mediator between department staff and external customers.
- Research pertinent law related to disputes.
- Review incoming appeals and facilitate dispute resolution.

Grade 18

Predominant/Essential Duties

- Responsible for scheduling and conducting all department and taxpayer-related disputes and liquor licensing adjudication.
- Supervise other dispute resolution officers and ad-hoc teams' activities and performance.
- Review and approve hearing decisions and mediation settlement agreements that are clear, precise, logically organized, and legally defensible.
- Act as hearings examiner and/or mediator between department staff and external customers.
- Research pertinent law related to disputes.
- Administer the dispute resolution process to insure consistency.
- Coach and mentor other staff.
- In addition to conducting adjudication with the agency as a party, adjudicate matters between outside parties other than the agency (those protesting licensing applications and the license applicants).

Competencies and Degrees of Proficiency

The Competency/Proficiency Chart identifies the role specific competencies, degrees of proficiency, and guidance required for each grade level. Role specific competencies describe the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform the essential duties. The degrees of proficiency indicate the difficulty and/or complexity level of the tasks and assignments.

Competency/Proficiency Chart - Dispute Resolution Officer Role

| Competencies | Grade 16 Minimal Guidance | Grade 17 Independently | Grade 18 Independently |
|--|------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Demonstrated ability to provide timely and effective written, oral, and interpersonal communication. | C | C | C |
| Demonstrated knowledge of appeal processes and timelines. | C | C | C |
| Demonstrated knowledge of state and federal laws, rules, and regulations regarding appeal processes and rights. | C | C | D |
| Demonstrated skill and ability to research, interpret, and develop conclusions on legal authority. | C | D | E |
| Demonstrated knowledge of legal tools and resources. | B | C | D |
| Demonstrated knowledge of administrative hearing procedures. | B | C | C |
| Demonstrated skill and ability to preside over conferences and hearings. | C | C | D |
| Demonstrated knowledge and ability in conflict resolution techniques relative to the role. | B | C | D |
| Proactively focus efforts and energy on successfully attaining goals and objectives, assuming accountability for decisions, actions, and results. Follow issues through to completion. | C | D | E |

Degree of Proficiency

A: A degree of knowledge, skill, or ability commensurate of elementary-level tasks and assignments.

B: A degree of knowledge, skill, or ability commensurate of intermediate-level tasks and assignments.

C: A degree of knowledge, skill, or ability commensurate of advanced-level tasks and assignments.

D: An advanced degree of knowledge, skill, or ability commensurate with considerable experience and the application of the competency to non-standard tasks and assignments.

E: The most advanced degree of knowledge, skill, or ability, evidencing complete mastery and understanding of the subject.